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C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 000079

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PGOV PREL MZ ZI UG
SUBJECT: EX-PRESIDENT CHISSANO ON ZIMBABWE, UGANDA

REF: KAMPALA 0007

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES TODD C. CHAPMAN, REASONS 1.4(B+D)

¶1. (C) Former President of Mozambique and UN Special Envoy for LRA-affected areas Joaquim Chissano told the Charge on January 27 that an LRA envoy came to Maputo on January 10 to inform that LRA leader Joseph Kony wanted a ceasefire so that he could sign the peace accord. Chissano said he had replied that Kony had to call personally to either him or to Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni with that request. Kony was to have called Chissano the previous evening (January 26) to discuss an agreement, but did not do so--Chissano commented that Kony regularly failed to make contact at agreed-upon times. Chissano said that he believed Kony feared the Ugandan military's ability to track his communications and would only call him at night when effective aerial bombing was less likely. Chissano said he thought Kony mostly spent his days in Sudan and Congo, crossing over into Uganda only after sunset. He emphasized that Kony needs to contact him as soon as possible so that the talks can move ahead, and without such contact, nothing could be done.

¶2. (C) On Zimbabwe, Chissano said that he had "nothing useful left to say" and that he is out of the loop on latest efforts to resolve the impasse. Nonetheless, he indicated that Tsvangarai's continuing refusal to form part of a new government contributed to the perception by average Zimbabweans that MPD was now just as much to blame for the country's woes as ZANU-PF. He said that both leaders needed to leave politics aside, be flexible, and achieve a governance solution that would get the economy going again, and thus keep people from starving. The longer both wait, the harder it is to find a solution, Chissano said. He criticized former Archbishop Desmond Tutu's comments on the impasse, saying that it wasn't the role of a man of the church to speak out against the government of Zimbabwe in such a way that could incite violence. Finally, Chissano said Mugabe needs a face-saving exit strategy in order to feel as though he could leave peacefully. Chissano likened the situation to leaving an open door in a straw hut for a mad dog that, when kicked, would most likely run out, whereas if the door were closed, the dog would probably turn and bite.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: In spite of his criticism of the Archbishop's stance, Chissano's body language and especially direct words conveyed frustration on Zimbabwe, and together with the thinly veiled comparison of Mugabe to a mad dog might suggest that even some of the old comrades from the independence struggles have grown weary of the problems next door. END COMMENT.

Chapman